



# *Town of Walpole*

## *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

### **PERSONNEL BOARD**

Michael McGrath, Chair  
Julie Lowre, Vice-Chair  
Jane Bergen  
Larry Pitman  
Jon Rockwood

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### **MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 29, 2020**

The Personnel Board met on Tuesday, September 29, 2020 beginning at 6:00pm via Zoom. The following members were present:

Michael McGrath, Chair  
Julie Lowre, Vice Chair  
Jane Bergen  
Larry Pitman  
Jon Rockwood

Also Present:  
Patrick Shield, Assistant Town Administrator  
Kristine Brown, Benefits Coordinator

### **Agenda Items:**

#### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. McGrath called the Personnel Meeting to order at 6:04pm

#### **UPDATE FROM TOWN ADMINISTRATION/REVIEW OF FINANCE DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION:**

Mr. Shield mentioned that Finance Director Marilyn Thompson will retire at the end of October. In 2015 Town Meeting voted to allow the Finance Director to be the Town Accountant. We have also added the Treasurer/collector position to the schedule. In Walpole we will have a Finance Director/Town Accountant and a separate Collector

Mr. Pitman wanted to know if this was a contractual position. He also mentioned that it might be good to amend that last sentence in the job description. Right now it reads "in any means necessary".

Mr. Shield said at this time the Town has not hired anyone for this position and that he would fix the last sentence. He agreed that the wording seemed a little drastic. Let's discuss the Finance Director/Town Accountant position first.

Mr. McGrath, under distinguishing characteristics, I feel like we discussed the wording in some of the previous positions we have updated. My recommendation is that we treat them all the same if we can.

Mr. Shield said that he is glad the Board brought that up so we can make everything consistent. Are there any other changes to the Finance Director/Town Accountant position?

Mr. Rockwood, it seems like this person is taking on a lot of responsibilities. Are there others in the department that will help?

Mr. Shield, yes there are others in that department who will help.

Mr. Pitman wanted to know if the Town had an organization chart that explains who reports to whom. It might be helpful to have something like this at Town Meeting.

Mr. Shield, that makes sense. We can create that and share it with the Board.

Motion moved by Mr. Pitman, to accept the revised job description as amended for the Finance Director/Town Accountant, seconded by Mr. Rockwood.

**Roll call vote:**

Mike McGrath: YES

Julie Lowre: YES

Jane Bergen: YES

Larry Pitman: YES

Jon Rockwood: YES

Vote 5-0-0 Approved

**REVIEW OF TREASURER/COLLECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION:**

Mr. Shield, we created this position. We had this position in the 80's but then we replaced it with the Finance Director position. Are there any questions/changes.

Mr. McGrath, it says *"work is generally reviewed only for technical adequacy, appropriateness of actions of decisions, and conformance with policy or other requirements, the methods used in arriving at the end result are not usually reviewed in detail"* what does that mean? I feel that the whole sentence is unnecessary since all employees should be doing that.

Mr. Shield said the position would be in its own lane but he agreed with Mr. McGrath that the language is already in State Law. We can re-write that or we can strike it all together.

Ms. Bergen said she found that particular sentence confusing as well.

Mr. McGrath asked the Board if they had any objection to striking that sentence all together.

All board members stated they would be fine striking that.

Mr. Pitman, under #5 it states *"responsible for supervising all functions for Town/School payroll"*

Mr. Shield explained that the schools have their own payroll process however the checks still come from the Treasurer/Collector office.

Mr. Pitman wanted to know the Town would pay for the certification classes if this particular individual needed to get certification. If so how much are those classes.

Mr. Shield stated that the Town would cover the costs to ensure the right individual was certified. It would be our ideal situation that this individual would already be certified. I will let you know the cost of the certification program.

Mr. Rockwood had minor changes. There is small typo in the second paragraph under definition - last line under distinguishing characteristics, a period is missing.

Ms. Lowre wanted to know if this would be a contractual position.

Mr. Shield said that this position is on the salary schedule but it would depend on the negotiations when that person is hired.

Mr. Pitman wanted to know when the current Finance Director, Marilyn Thompson is retiring.

Mr. Shield stated at the end of October. Our hope is that we can fill these positions quickly so there is some overlap.

Motion moved by Mr. McGrath to approve the Treasurer position as amended, seconded by Ms. Bergen

**Roll call vote:**

*Mike McGrath:* YES

*Julie Lowre:* YES

*Jane Bergen:* YES

*Larry Pitman:* YES

*Jon Rockwood:* YES

Vote 5-0-0 Approved

**APPROVAL OF PERSONNEL ACTION REQUESTS:**

Mr. Pitman wanted to know if the positions in the Water Department were new.

Mr. Shield explained that these were not new positions these are positions that we have been waiting to fill.

Mr. Rockwood wanted to know who Ashley Clark reported to. Does that particular position still report to the Planning Board.

Mr. Shield, that position reports to the Town Administrator. When the position reported to Planning, it didn't work out. Jim explained to the Planning Board that the position would now report to Administration. Planning Board agreed to this and has been hiring consultants if they need them. Ashley has been doing great. She has been knowledgeable with this 40B's. There have been some grant programs for small business and she has helped with these.

Ms. Lowre, I can attest to the fact that Ashley knows her stuff and can hold her own. She is solid.

Motion moved by Mr. Pitman to approve the PAR's and allow Mr. Shield to sign on the Board's behalf, seconded by Ms. Lowre

**Roll call vote:**

Mike McGrath: YES

Julie Lowre: YES

Jane Bergen: YES

Larry Pitman: YES

Jon Rockwood: YES

Vote 5-0-0 Approved

**MINUTES:**

**a. Approval of Minutes from September 1, 2020**

Motion moved by Mr. Pitman to approve the September 1, 2020 minutes as written, seconded by Ms. Lowre

**Roll call vote:**

Mike McGrath: YES

Julie Lowre: YES

Jane Bergen: YES

Larry Pitman: YES

Jon Rockwood: YES

Vote 5-0-0 Approved

**b. Approval of Minutes from September 8, 2020**

Mr. Pitman on page two of those minutes I want to add the red.

Ms. Lowre, I had one change on page 3, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph down, *"when we voted last fall to split the Park & Highway, there wasn't a request to staff with Assistant Superintendents. On the pay schedule, those positions were there. Should we remove them"* It was presented that they wouldn't be looking to add an assistant superintendent in the future. Or that they were not going to come back looking for these positions. I want to clarify that.

Mr. Shield, you want to change it to "Ms. Lowre stated when we voted last fall to split the Parks and Highway and it was presented that they would not come back requesting that the Assistant Superintendent positions be filled."

Motion moved by Ms. Bergen to approve the September 8, 2020 minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Rockwood

**Roll call vote:**

Mike McGrath: YES

Julie Lowre: YES

Jane Bergen: YES

Larry Pitman: YES  
Jon Rockwood: YES  
Vote 5-0-0 Approved

Mr. Shield mentioned that Julie would be creating a video on behalf of the Personnel Board. The Town Moderator requested this. The hope is that if Town Meeting members have questions they can go and watch the videos. I would like to thank Julie for doing this. Town Meeting will be held on Saturday October 17<sup>th</sup> at the High School football field. Mike, are you available that Saturday?

Mr. McGrath, I am available. We were planning on having our next Personnel Board meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup>, do we still want to keep that on the books.

Mr. Shield let's keep that scheduled in case there is anything that comes up during Town Meeting. We can cancel if we don't need it. Once we get past the Fall Town Meeting we will be looking towards fall budgets.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

With there being nothing else to discuss

Motion moved by Ms. Lowre to adjourn the Personnel Board meeting at 6:55pm, seconded by Mr. Rockwood.

#### **Roll call vote:**

Mike McGrath: YES  
Julie Lowre: YES  
Jane Bergen: YES  
Larry Pitman: YES  
Jon Rockwood: YES  
Vote 5-0-0 Approved

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Brown

Minutes approved on: **November 10, 2020**